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Press Office: 202-712-4320

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# FACT SHEET

## USAID: Investing in People

### Global Health

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs such as Child Survival and Maternal Health, Vulnerable Children, Family Planning and Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other infectious diseases, serve as a cornerstone of U.S. foreign assistance. USAID's health programs save millions of lives by supporting immunizations, disease prevention and control through, nutrition, sanitation, hygiene, breastfeeding, birth spacing and other health interventions.

#### Child Survival

Most preventable child deaths are from malnutrition, diarrhea, pneumonia, infections of newborns and malaria. During the past five years, the United States has contributed more than \$1.5 billion treating almost five billion episodes of child diarrhea with lifesaving oral rehydration therapy, reducing deaths from diarrheal disease by more than half since 1990. Almost a half a billion children have received basic immunizations, and more than 375 million cases of child pneumonia were treated by health workers. Child malnutrition has been reduced by 25 percent to 1 in 4; and an estimated 500,000 children were saved last year by micronutrient supplementation. In the developing world, these efforts and others save the lives of 6 million children under age 5 each year.

#### Maternal Health

Each year more than 500,000 women die pregnancy and childbirth-related complications, and an additional 15-20 million women suffer debilitating consequences of pregnancy. USAID has sharpened its focus on a set of effective interventions targeting specific high-mortality complications of pregnancy and birth - hemorrhage, hypertension, infections, anemia and prolonged labor. Across all USAID-assisted countries, deliveries attended by skilled health workers has increased from an average of 37 percent in 1990 to 50 percent in 2005; the greatest progress has been in the Asia and Near East region, where coverage has more than doubled, increasing from 21 to 47 percent.

#### Newborn Health

Each year, 4 million newborns die in the first four weeks of life, accounting for 40 percent of all deaths among children under the age of 5. USAID assists newborn care programs in 27 countries, covering the full spectrum of approaches, ranging from community-based activities to outreach and clinic care.

#### Polio

In 2005, USAID-supported polio campaigns immunized more than 350 million children under age 5 in Africa and Asia. The Polio Eradication Initiative has saved five million children from death or paralysis, and these children now face a productive life free from disability and disfigurement.

## **Tuberculosis**

About 1.6 million people die each year due to tuberculosis. The U.S. is working to eliminate TB as a public health threat to humankind, helping to provide effective treatment for 10 million people with TB in 78 countries over the past six years. With US support, TB deaths in Afghanistan dropped more than 38 percent, and TB incidence dropped almost 50 percent.

## **Avian Influenza**

Outbreaks intensified in Southeast Asia in 2005, spreading to other regions, carrying with them an ever-present risk of a deadly global flu pandemic in humans. Along with partners in the international community and the U.S. Government, USAID launched an aggressive global response to the avian influenza threat, providing urgent assistance and support to help a number of countries prevent and contain avian influenza (AI) outbreaks. USAID is assisting 55 countries with support for AI task forces and preparedness plans and in 25 of those countries, USAID is supporting the development and improvement of animal veterinary capacity. USAID is also promoting better biosecurity practices in poultry-raising settings in 20 countries and supporting AI-related communications. Most notably, poultry outbreaks in Thailand and Vietnam – which accounted for 88 percent of outbreaks between 2003 and 2005 – were reduced dramatically in 2006. Poultry outbreaks fell from more than 1,500 in 2005 to just 209 in 2006, and human cases dropped from 75 to three over the same period.

## **Immunization**

Immunization programs prevent life-threatening childhood infections including measles, tetanus, pertussis, polio and diphtheria. The United States continues to be one of the largest supporters for immunization, committing more than \$350 million to a global vaccine initiative. In five years, almost 100 million additional children received new vaccines, with 2006 efforts reaching another 38 million youngsters. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the premature deaths of 2.3 million children have been prevented through these efforts.

## **Safe Water**

About 1.6 million children under age 5 died last year from diarrheal diseases caused by unsafe water and sanitation in developing countries, and millions more were put at significant risk of exposure to water-borne infections, such as cholera, typhoid fever and dysentery. Household-level, or point-of-use (POU) chlorination is one approach that has been tested at a national scale and has demonstrated to have a public health impact on diarrhea at a sufficiently low cost to allow wide coverage. USAID is promoting two approaches to POU chlorination — the Safe Water System developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and PuR developed by Procter and Gamble. These disinfection technologies have been shown to reduce disease and death from 35-50 percent.

## **Food Fortification**

More than two billion people worldwide lack sufficient quantities of zinc, vitamin A, iron and iodine, which are now being added to processed foods such as rice and sugar under USAID-supported programs. USAID is improving the micronutrient content of basic foods by expanding research into supplementation and the development and dissemination of biofortified crops. This research includes investigation of: enhanced vitamin A, iron and zinc maize; enhanced iron and zinc beans; and vitamin A enhanced sweet potato. In 2005, USAID supported 22 food fortification programs with the potential to reach nearly 500 million people in 19 countries.

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